

Making a “Safe Escape”

We all know its not a good idea to ever talk to, go with or take anything from a stranger, right? But what if you find yourself in a situation where you need to make a Safe Escape from a stranger situation?

The following techniques and tips are great to keep in mind and have prepared to use if needed:

- **The Windmill technique**– When grabbed by the arm by a stranger, swinging you arm around in a forward motion, like a windmill, will cause them to release.
- **Attract Attention**– Get away, right away, and do whatever you can to attract attention to the situation. Run to a house, business or Police or Fire Station when there is always someone there who can help.
- If being followed by a car, turn & run in the **Opposite Direction**. It is much harder for the person to turn around and go after you , then to follow you in a forward direction.

If you find yourself in a stranger’s car:

- Jump in their lap, scream, honk the horn to draw attention. Pull any wires you can under the dash (or in the trunk if that is where you are). Shove a button or other small object in the ignition, to prevent them from starting the car
- Grab the keys and toss them.
- Get the attention of other drivers around you.
- If you stop somewhere, leave a personal item or note behind, to help those looking for you determine a travel direction.

“I think I may have witnessed an abduction, what should I do?”

Tell a trusted adult as soon as possible. Try to remember everything you can about what you saw and where you saw it. A good witness is the best key to helping someone return safe.

- What did you see?
- Where and when did you see it happen?
- What did the suspect and victim look like?
- What did the vehicle look like?
- What direction did they go?

Playing it safe around Strangers



Brought to you by:

*West Des Moines
Police
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What does a stranger look like?

Is he a man in a dark trench coat and hat? Does he have tattoos and bad teeth? Is he unclean and have a beard?

The answer to that question is much simpler than that.

A stranger is someone you don't know.

They could be a man or a woman., young or old. They could be wearing old dirty clothes, or a suit and tie. They could be very nice and kind, and have no intention of causing you any harm. But no matter what, the rules are still the same.

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What should you do if a Stranger approaches?

We have always been taught to be polite and helpful to others. They are both very good qualities to have. But when it comes to strangers, those qualities aren't necessary. Bad Strangers will often use LURES to entice children to go with them.

Remember- If a stranger asks you questions, you don't have to answer. If a stranger asks for your help, maybe finding a lost pet or with directions to someplace, you don't have to help them. If a stranger claims to be injured or sick and need help, you don't have to help them. If a stranger wants to give you a gift or a ride, you don't have to accept it. You **do** have to say :

“NO! I don't know you!” as LOUD as you can and RUN!

As a child, it's not your responsibility to assist a stranger with anything. You can go find an adult you know and trust to give them the assistance they need. And you will never be in trouble for being rude to a stranger. Your parents will understand and be proud of the smart choice you made.

Knowledge creates a CHAIN of choices!

Telephone and Doorbell Strangers

When you happen to be home alone, someone you don't know may come to the door or call on the telephone. What should you do?

Here are some simple rules to remember:

- Don't give your name or answer any questions until you know who is speaking. Say, “ Who is calling please?”
- Never tell any caller you are home alone. Ask your parents what you should say if you answer the phone when they are not home. Sometimes it's best to say “They can't come to the phone right now, may I take a message?”
- Never open the door to anyone you don't know. This is a good rule even when your parents are home.
- If, when you ask who is there, they say they are delivering something, don't answer the door. Have them leave it on the step or come back later.
- If they won't leave, and continue to knock or ring the bell, call a neighbor or your parents. Or even 911. It's never wrong to ask for help if you're uncertain about a stranger at the door.